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EFFECT OF VIPASSANA MEDITATION ON MINDFULNESS AND LIFE SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

In this study an attempt has been made to measure the mindfulness of employees who practice Vipassana meditation regularly. This study looked at the relationship between meditation experience, trait mindfulness and life satisfaction. We hypothesized that trait mindfulness and life satisfaction is positively impacted by Vipassana meditation. For this purpose data was collected using a quantitative survey involving two employee groups comprising of meditators and non-meditators each having 155 adult individual members. Mindfulness was measured using short version of Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ-SF) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was used to measure life satisfaction. The results obtained by these self-report measures were consistent with our hypothesis. They showed higher levels of mindfulness and life satisfaction in the group who were regular meditators. The scores suggested a direct relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction. Also, correlation analysis indicated significant correlation between Non-Reaction facet of mindfulness and meditation practice. It was confirmed that regular practice strengthens effectiveness of meditation. This indicates that Vipassana meditation is an effective intervention to enhance mindfulness and fosters life satisfaction in employees.

KEYWORDS

vipassana meditation, mindfulness, life satisfaction, employees.

1. INTRODUCTION

ipassana is an ancient Indian technique of meditation rediscovered by Gautam Buddha. In Pali, the language used by Buddha, Vipassana means 'insight', to see things as they are. Vipassana meditation (VM) is a way of transforming the self through self-observation resulting in increased awareness and mental peace i.e. equanimity (Goenka, 1991). The experience of inner peace within oneself leads to non-delusion, better self-control and greater clarity of thought. This has been acknowledged widely in society and in literature. In the organizational context, at the individual level, to use VM technique is to enhance a sense of mind-body balance by increased self-awareness. This enhanced self-awareness helps induce selective adaptive responses as against automated non-adaptive reactions, and promotes successful management of stressful life situations (Hart, 1987).

The present study evaluates Vipassana practitioners of the Theravadan tradition, taught by S. Goenka (Hart, 1987). In this technique, sensations within the body are observed in an iterative manner repeatedly. The person practicing this insight meditation learns to understand the difference between his actual and perceived experiences and thoughts (Williams et al., 2007). Brown et al., 2007, stated that we view the world as per our perception of it without considering its reality. The main objective of 'insight meditation' is to develop in the practitioner 'bare attention', which in Buddhist terms means to get him to observe his world with clarity in a calm and detached manner (Wallace, 2005, p.55). The practice of mindfulness meditation enables a person to evaluate the experience of mental suffering and anguish in a balanced and true light. According to Wallace & Shapiro, 2006, mindfulness meditation helps one to realize that mental distress is due to the perceived disparity between real and imagined experiences. Mindfulness initiates new adaptive ways of responding to one's life experiences by liberating the mind from established old automated ways of reacting (Kabat-Zinn, 1982).

Even though research on mindfulness is increasingly well established in psychology and medicine, it is still in its infancy within an organizational scenario. However, this is beginning to change for several reasons. First, the hypothesized benefits of mindfulness have received increasing support from empirical research (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Chiesa & Serreti, 2009). Second, attention (as in attention span) has long been recognized as a crucial bottleneck in organizations, and mindfulness offers a new perspective on the nature and role of attention (Levinthal & Rerup, 2006).

Motivated by a need to further examine and understand mindfulness, this paper attempts to measure the effectiveness of regular VM practice on mindfulness and satisfaction with life. In this study mindfulness is analyzed by studying regular meditators where it has become a way of life rather than where it has been a short-term intervention. The hypothesized effects of mindfulness are empirically examined in a comparative study of 155 non-meditators and 155 meditators by administering mindfulness questionnaire FFMQ-SF (Bohlmeijer et al., 2011) and life satisfaction scale SWLS (Diner et. al., 1985). The findings of the conducted study, which support the theorized relationships, are presented and practical and theoretical implications are proposed.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Today, employees receive fair monetary compensation for the work they perform in their respective organizations. They are easily able to afford a comfortable life style measured in materialistic terms. However, many employees report their inability to cope with increasing stress and anxiety both at their workplace as well as in their personal life leading to unhappiness and lack of satisfaction in their lives.

Keeping this in view, we did a literature review to understand the drivers of life satisfaction and interventions such as mindfulness to enhance employee happiness, wellbeing and life satisfaction.

2.1 LIFE SATISFACTION

SWLS was developed to assess an individual's own satisfaction with his life taken as a whole.

Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2005, have stated that life satisfaction indicates people's perception of the quality of their life. It can also be termed as the cognitive facet of subjective well-being. Subjective well-being measures a person's assessment of how well their life is progressing (Lucas & Donnellan, 2007).

Argyle et al., 1989, said that the average level of satisfaction over a specific time period can be termed as one of the elements of happiness. There is a direct correlation between the concept of happiness and life satisfaction and it also encompasses subjective well-being and quality of life. In their research report on 'Life Satisfaction and Happiness', Sergin & Taylor, 2007, have documented a correlation of 0.62, (p < 0.001) between the two.

2.2 MINDFULNESS

The insight meditation consists of three sub-units:

- 1- Anapanasati: Mindfulness of breathing
- 2- Vipassana: Insight meditation
- 3- Metta Bhavana: Universal love and compassion.

Ven. Narada, 1988, expresses metta bhavana as a state of true friendship. It is a sincere wish for the happiness and welfare of all living beings (p. 614). 'Anapanasati' is used as the first step to develop concentration in meditation practice.

In Pali language, 'ana' is incoming, 'apana' is outgoing and 'sati' is awareness. Therefore, 'anapanasati' is awareness or 'being mindful' of incoming and outgoing breath as it happens naturally. Ven. Nyanaponika Thera, 1996, stated that awareness of breathing or mindfulness helps in calming mental as well as physical disturbances.

Epstein, 2001, says, "Mindfulness means paying attention, on purpose, to one's own thoughts, feelings and judgments ... It is the practice of being fully present in our attention to where we are, what we are doing, and what is happening at the moment", (p. 64).

By being mindful, one is attending to one's breath, bodily sensations, thoughts and feelings, as well as sights and sounds in a holistic manner rather than focusing on a specific stimulus. This reduces the chances of being overwhelmed and getting carried away by one's thoughts and emotions. Thus it aids in avoiding futile worry about the future and indulgence in maladaptive reflection (Williams et al. 2007). Daily distractions are reduced and as a result one is able to emerge from emotional upheaval. The individual develops a non-reactive approach to inner experiences and observes passing of thoughts and emotions without being engulfed by them (Baer et al., 2006). This state of equanimity enables a more conscious, less conditioned response, which is more conducive to stress resistance and resilience (Teasdale et al., 1995).

Following this structure, mindfulness can be compartmentalized across three main subdivisions: 1) being fully aware of the present moment; 2) the quality of awareness; and 3) the attitude of the observer. According to Shapiro et al., 2006, it is intention, attention, and attitude.

Therefore, it is appropriate to say that mindfulness is a complex construct and conducting research on mindfulness will require a multifaceted assessment. Keeping this in view various scales like the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by Brown & Ryan, 2003, the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS) by Baer et al., 2004, were developed to measure the mindfulness construct. At present the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) developed by Baer (Baer et al., 2006; Baer et al., 2008), is the most commonly used questionnaire to study mindfulness. The advantage of working with FFMQ is that Baer merged 5 top rated questionnaires on mindfulness and selected elements from them after conducting a factor analysis.

Researchers working on mindfulness acknowledge that while it could be considered a trait difference between individuals mindfulness is also a skill that can be acquired and nurtured (Kabat-Zinn, 1996).

The literature is replete with anecdotal and empirical evidence of the beneficial impact of the practice of mindfulness in diverse areas such as health and healing (KabatZinn, 1982), care giving (Shiera et al., 2011), law enforcement and prisons (Khurana & Dhar, 2002), education (Adaviyappa, 1994) and personnel development (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2011), and organizations (Avey et al., 2008).

2.2.1 Mindfulness and Health

Anecdotal evidence of the practice of mindfulness meditation (MM) indicates that it helps to develop sustained joy and happiness by achieving freedom from dissatisfaction and suffering (Analayo, 2003). To study its effectiveness on various clinical conditions, many attempts have been made to include different elements of mindfulness as a part of psychological interventions (Chiesa, 2009).

The focus of Buddhist philosophy and the analytical approach of psychology are related in that they both aim to eradicate suffering by reducing 'destructive' emotions like anger, and enhancing emotions like compassion and happiness which are considered 'constructive'. Brown & Ryan, 2003, concluded that when individuals act mindfully, their actions are consistent with their values and interests, and the awareness and consciousness one has towards day-to-day experiences is the deciding factor of one's psychological wellbeing.

Goldin, 2001, in his 'Mindfulness Meditation Research Findings', observed that when two groups were subjected to meditation they indicated increase in dimensions related to self-actualization and their stress related symptoms decreased. Adhikari, 2012, in the 'Study of Effect of Vipassana on Anxiety and Depression', states that practicing 'anapana' aids in effectively handling negative wishes and impulses and helps to establish a greater control over the mind.

Mindfulness has shown considerable decrease in anxiety disorder (Sharma et al., 2012, Miller et al., 2012). Mindfulness has been useful in reducing pain experienced by long term patients who did not show any improvement when subjected to standard medical care (Kabat-Zinn, 1982). Several therapists have reported using 'anapana' as relaxation therapy in clinical practice (Fleischman, 1991). In an electroencephalographic (E.E.G.) study of non-meditators and meditators, Pradhan, 2000, has recorded an increase in positive brain activity in meditators.

Baer, 2007, documented that when individuals observe their experiences mindfully their symptoms related to various disorders are reduced and psychological wellbeing is enhanced. In another paper, Baer et al., 2008, studied FFMQ for its construct validity amongst groups of non- meditators and meditators. Results indicated a significant relationship between psychological symptoms, well-being, meditation experience and different facets of mindfulness. Also, the strength of the relationship varied with meditation experience. Bruin et al., 2012, examined the Dutch version of mindfulness questionnaire FFMQ-NL. They reported that for meditating as well as non-meditating samples, overall mindfulness was negatively correlated to dissociation, worry, recurrent playback of negative thoughts and emotions, thought suppression, and alexithymia.

2.2.2 Mindfulness and Organization

According to Kabat-Zinn, 1996, mindfulness practice increases an individual's ability to interact with others with a sense of trust and handle stressful interpersonal events with confidence rather than as threats that would otherwise lead to a fight or flight response. It could be that mindfulness promotes our ability to examine our thoughts and emotions in a detached 'spectator' mode so that we don't react impulsively and destructively.

Atkins and Parker, 2012, argued that compassionate organizational behavior is associated with more helpful behavior, increased trust, support, and cooperation. According to them compassionate behavior requires a regulated response involving cognition, rather than an automatic reaction. They further suggested that mindfulness may be an important facilitator of compassionate behavior by allowing employees to respond consciously to situations, instead of reacting automatically.

In a laboratory study by Ruedy and Schweitzer, 2011, results showed that more mindful participants were less willing to engage in unethical behavior, exhibited a more principled approach to ethical decision-making, and were more concerned with how ethically they saw themselves rather than how ethically others perceived them to be.

The study by Banerjee, 2012, in his paper on 'Alleviating Business Challenges' confirms that if employees practice meditation they will be more focused, attentive, composed, and this will give them an edge over other employees. Avey et al., 2008, have documented that employees practicing mindfulness tend to be more aware of their negative thinking patterns, which enables them to continue to be hopeful, resilient and optimistic about their work particularly when faced with organizational changes. The Vipassana meditation process and in turn, mindfulness has a high influence on professional and personal effectiveness of managers (Kumar, 2012). It was found effective in enhancing productivity by lessening employee anxiety (Bhatnagar, 2014). Shiera & Graham, 2014, concluded that being mindful affected social work practitioners' overall Subjective Well-Being (SWB) positively.

Marques & Satinder, 2009, believe that Vipassana meditation can make great contributions to transforming workplace wellbeing and productivity. In order to transform the way in which employees behave, interact and communicate with each other in the workplace, they will need to undergo a transformation within themselves.

In a nutshell, benefits of mindfulness practices are supported by considerable research in domains other than the workplace (Chiesa & Serreti, 2011). However, more research is needed to enrich mindfulness literature applicable to organizations. The present study seeks to make a contribution towards enriching the research literature in the workplace domain by focusing on employees who enrolled for VM.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 1. There is an effect of Vipassana Meditation on employees' mindfulness.
- 2. There is an effect of Vipassana Meditation on employees' satisfaction with life.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 STUDY CONTEXT & SAMPLE

For this study the research design we used was After-Only with Control Design (Kothari & Garg, 2014). The overall approach taken to empirically test the research hypothesis was mindfulness questionnaire FFMQ-SF containing 24 questions and life satisfaction scale SWLS containing 5 questions. The instrument also had a section to collect demographic details of respondents. This instrument was administered for data collection. The data was collected from employees of various organizations enrolled at Bangalore Vipassana Meditation Centre, South India, for a 10-day residential Vipassana course. The two groups to whom the instrument was administered were:

- 1. Employees coming for the first time to attend a 10-day Vipassana course without any training in meditation prior to this course (Control Group).
- 2. Employees who have completed a minimum of three 10-day Vipassana courses and have been practicing VM regularly (Experimental Group).

The Vipassana course is open to all and is non-sectarian. Employees enrolled in the course represent a broad cross-section of society. For data collection, convenience sampling method was used. The participation was voluntary and there was no coercion. Also, the respondents were assured that the data collected would be used only for research purposes and personal identity was neither sought for in the instrument nor was any identity disclosed. They were instructed to respond to the instrument candidly. The instrument had a section for 'instructions to respondents' that clearly explained what was expected of the respondents. The respondents were administered the questionnaire after they completed their enrolment for the Vipassana course. They had approximately 4-5 hours of alone time in their respective rooms where they could fill in the questionnaire at their leisure. The completed questionnaire was collected before the commencement of the course. A total 155 samples each were collected from non-meditator and meditator groups.

4.2 RESEARCH VARIABLES

4.2.1 Mindfulness Variables

As mentioned, trait mindfulness was measured by self-report FFMQ-SF 24 item scale developed and validated by Bohlmeijer et al., 2011, a shorter version of 39 item FFMQ (Baer, 2006). FFMQ-SF was selected as it has a broad-based psychometric design.

The 5 Facets are:

	FACETS	REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE OF FACET QUESTION
1	Non React(NR) (5 items)	When I have distressing thoughts or images , I feel calm soon after
2	Observe(OB) (4 items)	I notice the smells and aromas of things
3	Act Aware (AA) (5 items)	I rush through activities without being really attentive to them
4	Describe (DS) (5 items)	I can easily put my beliefs, opinions and expectations into words
5	Non-Judgement (NJ) (5 items)	I make judgements about whether my thoughts are good or bad

The Instrument has a 5 point Likert scale with 1 representing 'Never or Very Rarely True' and 5 representing 'Very Often or Always True'. The scale is used to compute the five composite subscale scores and a total mindfulness score.

4.2.2 Life Satisfaction Variables

For measuring life satisfaction, SWLS developed by Diener et al., 1985, was used. The scoring of this scale is done on a 7-point Likert scale with 1 representing 'Strongly Disagree' and 7 representing 'Strongly Agree'. Higher scores indicate a higher degree of life satisfaction. "I am satisfied with my life", is one of the items out of the total five items of this instrument.

4.2.3 Results

The data was analyzed and results were computed using SPSS 20.0 software. SPSS's procedure 'mean of nearby points' was used to fill in missing values in the data (George & Mallery, 2011). The personal data section of the questionnaire also captured data on the mental ailments of the respondents. Those respondents who reported having mental ailments were excluded from the study. Three out of 158 respondents (< 2%) were excluded.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL SAMPLE GROUPS

	Control Group		Experimental Group	
Demographic Parameter	No	%	No	%
Gender				
Male	100	64.5	97	62.6
Female	55	35.5	58	37.4
Age Profile				
Average Age of Group	33.74		41.37	
Upto 25 years	21	13.5	5	3.2
26 – 35 years	78	50.3	47	30.3
36 – 45 years	44	28.4	52	33.5
46 – 55 years	7	4.5	28	18.1
Greater than 55 years	5	3.2	23	14.8
Educational Qualifications				
Junior College	5	3.2	11	7.1
Diploma	6	3.9	6	3.9
Graduate	81	52.3	53	34.2
Post Graduate	58	37.4	78	50.3
Doctorate	5	3.2	7	4.5
Meditation Practice Profile				
Average No of 10 day courses attended			5.38	
Average period of practicing Meditation in Months			63.67	
Average daily Meditation practice in Hours			2.08	

Descriptive statistics for the demographic details of the two groups are shown in Table 1. It can be seen that the gender composition of the two groups was similar. In addition, more than 90% of both the groups were educated at graduate and beyond the graduate level (non-meditators = 92.9%; meditators = 90.0%). The average age of the non-meditators group was 33.74 years and the meditators group was 41.37 years. Further, on an average the meditator group members

meditated for 2.08 hours daily and had been practicing meditation for more than 60 months (i.e. 5 years). On an average these members had attended 5.38 number of 10-day meditation courses.

The data collected was subjected to the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) test of sampling adequacy. The results indicate that the KMO values obtained were above the acceptable level (Table-2).

Table 2: Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for Study Sample				
Scales	KMO Measure for Sampling Adequacy			
FFMQ	0.756			
Life Satisfaction	0.818			

The data collected was also tested for reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha value was computed for the FFMQ-SF subscale variables as well as the SWLS variables. The FFMQ-SF and SWLS scales were shown to be reliable and valid, as Cronbach's Alpha of the subscales varied from 0.834 to 0.727 except for Non-Judgment facet. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted on the meditator group data for FFMQ-SF which showed an acceptable model fit with the 5 factor structure of the FFMQ (Baer .2006) and a good model fit for the structure of the FFMQ-SF (Bohlmeijer et al..2011).

Based on the above, wherein the data samples collected were shown to be adequate, reliable and valid and where the subscales were shown to conform to the 5 Facet Mindfulness model through an EFA, the data of the two groups was then subjected to further analyses with a view to either accept or reject the study Hypothesis enumerated in Section 3.0 of this study.

The Mindfulness Facet Group-wise Statistics clearly showed a shift towards higher mean score values for the meditator group as compared to the non-meditator

Similarly, the Overall Mindfulness and Life Satisfaction Scale Group-wise Statistics clearly shows a shift towards higher mean score values for the meditator group as compared to the non-meditator group.

To verify if the differences in the mean values of the FFMQ-SF facet scores and the SWLS scores achieved by the two groups (viz. non-meditator and meditator) were significant, an Independent samples T-test was conducted.

The results of the Independent Sample t-Test depicted in Table 3 show that for all the mindfulness facets except the Observe facet the differences in the means are significant with Sig (2- tailed) < 0.05 and therefore our Alternative Hypothesis is accepted and the first objective of this research paper is fulfilled. Further, there is a positive impact (t- values are all negative) on the mindfulness of the employee-meditators.

TABLE 3: MINDFULNESS FACET INDEPENDENT SAMPLES t - Test Levene's Test t-Test for Equality of Means MINDFULNESS FACETS **Std Error Difference** df Mean difference Sig. Sig. (2 tailed) **Observe Score** Equal variances assumed 1.148 .285 -1.277 308 .203 -.464 .364 Equal variances not assumed -1.277 304.716 .203 -.464 .364 -1.018 425 Describe Score 1.47 .226 308 Equal variances assumed -2.396 .017Equal variances not assumed -2.396 304.627 .017 -1.018 .425 **ActAware Score** Equal variances assumed .058 .809 -6.285 308 .000 -2.763 .440 -2.763 .440 -6.285 306.561 .000 Equal variances not assumed Non-Judgemental Score Equal variances assumed 5.016 .026 -5.016 308 .000 -1.866 .372 Equal variances not assumed -5.016 300.849 .000 -1.866 .372 .875 308 -2.927 .363 Non-React score .350 -8.076 .000 Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed -8.076 304.195 .000 -2.927 .363

TABLE 4: OVERALL MINDFULNESS & LIFE SATISFACTION INDEPENDENT SAMPLES t - Test
TABLE 4. OVERALE MINDFOLNESS & LIFE SATISFACTION INDEPENDENT SAMIFLES (= 165)

			Levene's Test		t-Test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean difference	Std Error Difference	
TOTAL FFMQ	Equal variances assumed	.212	.645	-7.727	308	.000	-9.038	1.170	
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.727	307.958	.000	-9.038	1.170	
TOTAL LIFE SATSFACTION	Equal variances assumed	7.753	.006	-4.863	308	.000	-3.387	.697	
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.863	297.088	.000	-3.387	.697	

The results of the Independent Sample T-test depicted in Table 4 show that for 'Overall Mindfulness and Life Satisfaction' the differences in the means are significant with Sig (2- tailed) < 0.05 and therefore our Alternative Hypothesis is accepted and the second objective of this research paper has been achieved. Further, there is a positive impact (t values are all negative) on the Life Satisfaction of the employee-meditators.

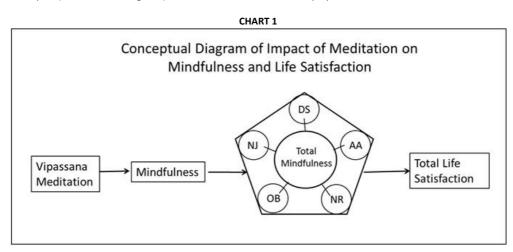


CHART 2 Diagrammatic Representation of the Results of the Study **Total Life Satisfaction** Score = 24.7Score Enhancement by **Total Life Satisfaction** Score = 21.3 Total FFMQ Score = 81.5 Total FFMQ Meditation Vipassana Score = 72.5 Score No Enhancement by Meditation VM = 9.0Meditators Non-Meditators

Further, a bivariate correlation analysis was conducted using the five FFMQ facet scores as well as the variables measuring the quantum of meditation practice such as the 'No of months of meditation practice' and the 'Daily hours of practice' for the meditator group.

The analysis showed:

- Describe facet has significant positive relation with Non-React, Act-Aware and Observe facets (p < 0.01). Non-React showed a significant positive relation with Act-Aware (p < 0.01) and Observe facets (p < 0.05). A significant positive correlation between Act Aware and Non Judgmental facets (r = 0.221, p < 0.01) indicated a linear relation between the two.
- 2. In contrast, a negative relation was shown between Observe and Non-Judgmental facets (r = 0.221, p < .01).
- 3. Meditation practice is positively correlated with Non-React (r = 0.190, p < 0.05) confirming earlier research that meditation makes individuals non-reactive and face life situations with equanimity. As expected 'Daily hours of practice' had a positive correlation with 'Meditation Practice' indicating that daily practice strengthens meditation.

5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

5.1 DISCUSSION

The Observe facet showed a negative correlation with Non-Judgmental facet. The variant behavior of the Observe facet was explained by Baer in his study where he said that the Observe facet functions differently in those with meditation experience and he suggested that this variant behavior requires extensive additional validation in a range of samples (Baer, et al. 2008). However, the negative correlation of the Observe facet seen in the current study could be due to the fact that in FFMQ-SF the items chosen for this facet comprised only of external observation and observation within was absent. It is recommended that this may be further studied and validated.

In addition, Baer et al., 2006, in their analysis of the FFMQ validation study did not use the raw item scores captured, but instead used an average of two or more items taken together i.e. 'item parcels', supposedly to reduce the complexity of estimating a large number of co-variances. It is not clear if such a treatment introduced any biases in the analysis and needs to be further studied.

Also, employing a set of scales may be a simplistic approach to measure an integrated behavioral phenomenon like mindfulness.

In addition, the variation between the present data results and results by Baer et al. may be attributed to the fact that the standardized FFMQ questionnaires measured the mindfulness of individuals under clinical observation and students, whereas in this study they have been administered to employed meditators working in different organizations.

5.2 CONCLUSION

As validated in this research and in agreement with available literature, experience in meditation strengthens and enhances mindfulness. Proving all research hypotheses, the results suggest that meditation experience significantly contributes to life satisfaction. The anticipated outcomes of this study are twofold; firstly, to encourage further research into the ancient practice of Buddhist meditation and secondly, to lend empirical support to the belief that mindfulness helps individuals and in turn organizations indicating that it is beneficial to internalize it as a way of life. However, as Marques & Satinder, 2009, stated, inner transformation and its many benefits are only possible if one practices and experiences insight meditation. "Ehipassiko", said the Buddha, "come and see for yourself".

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